

# HOW TO NEGOTIATE WITH YOUR INTERIOR DESIGNER

*A house  
is much more  
than a mere  
shelter, it  
should  
lift us  
emotionally  
and  
spiritually.*

*- John Saladino*





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# INTRODUCING ELEMENTS OF INTERIOR DESIGN

This book is a practical guide for price negotiation if you are using a contractor to do your interior design works. Pricing in the Interiors industry is mainly based on the following elements

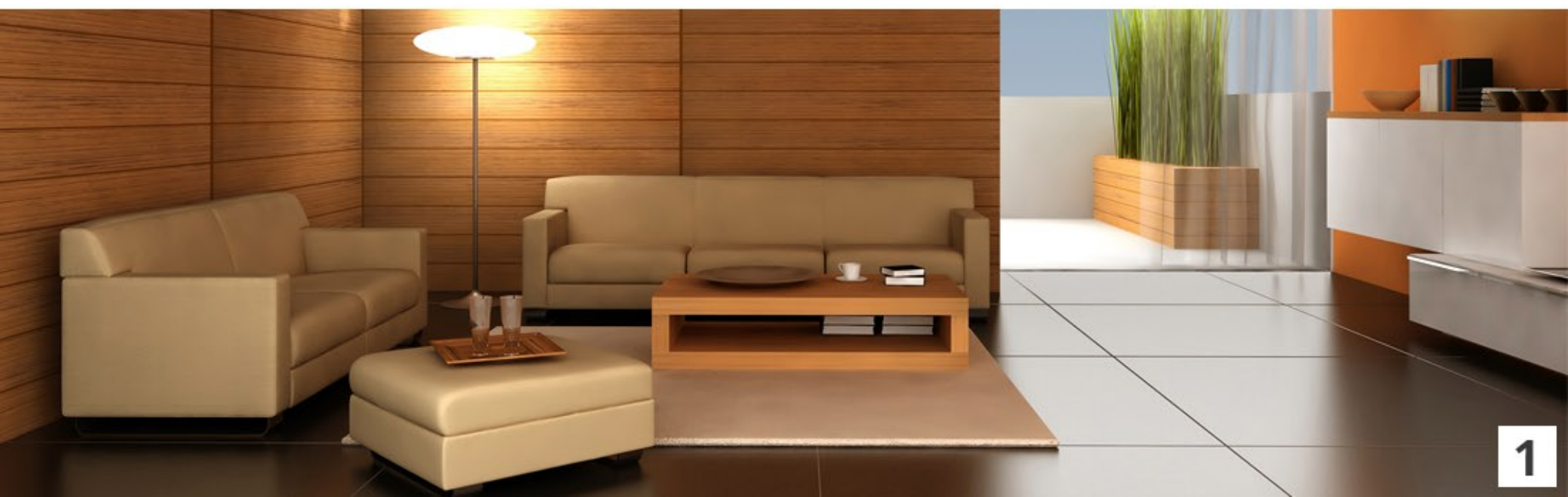
1. Cost of Raw Materials
2. Cost of Labour
3. Design complexity or Design intensity
4. Profit Margin of the Interior designer/Contractor

We are going to be talking about the first three elements in this E-book.

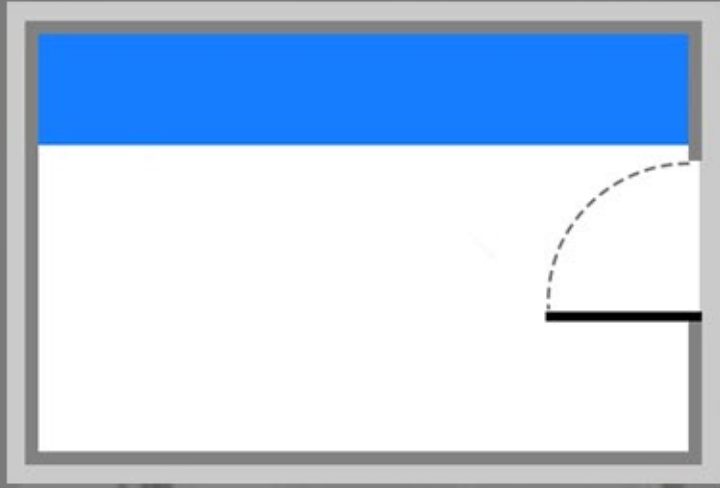
Knowing a bit more on the raw material or say design choices will help you make informed choices and help in negotiation.

**We just have one thing to say on point number 4:**

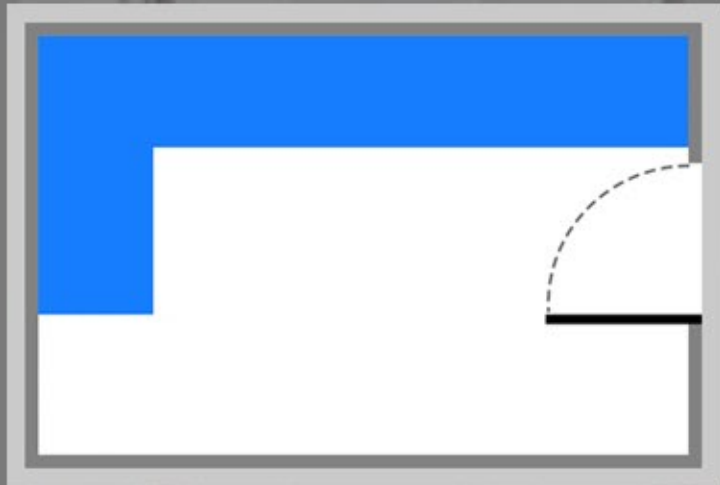
*"If you think it's expensive to hire a professional to do the job, wait until you hire an amateur"* - Red Adair, American oil well fire-fighter



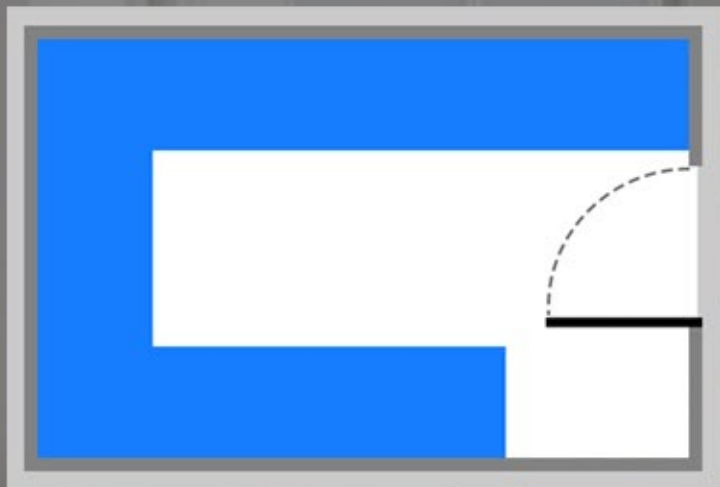
## Various Types of Kitchens



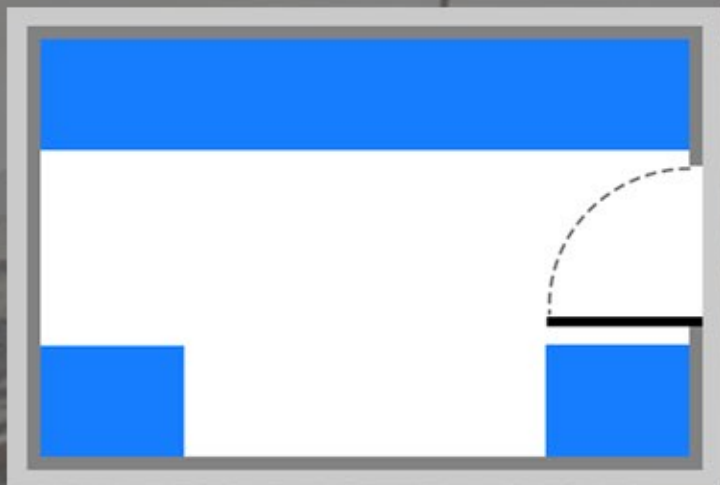
Single Wall



L - Shape



U - Shape



Other

# KNOW YOUR SPACE & COSTING

Before you start negotiating with the Interior designer, you would want to be sure on what you want. Firm up the requirements so that you don't give a chance for your negotiations to go waste when the specifications keep changing.

### Calculate the approximate cost yourself

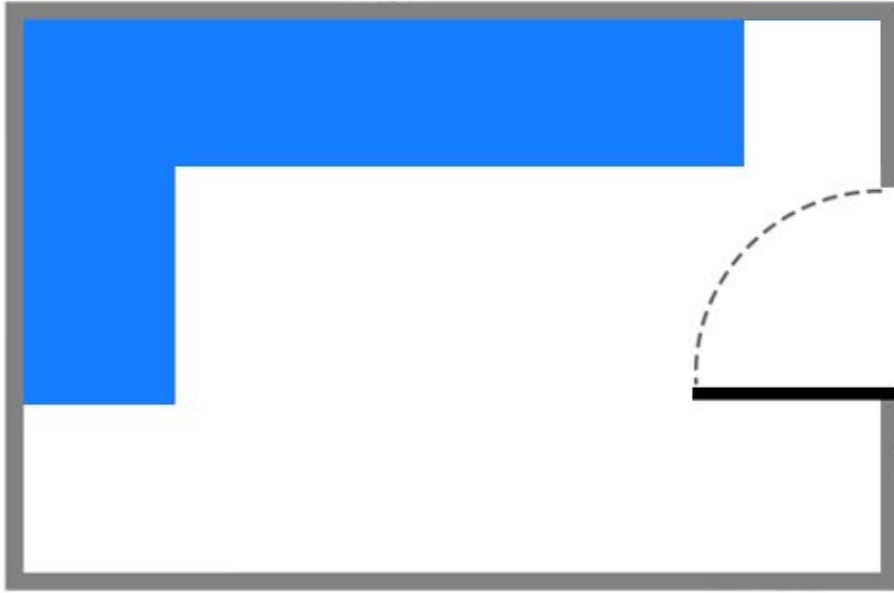
In the initial fact finding, you would be asking the interior design costs in your city from your friends and neighbors. A frequent answer that you might hear is say Rs 1500 per sqft.





Here is how you calculate your work area:

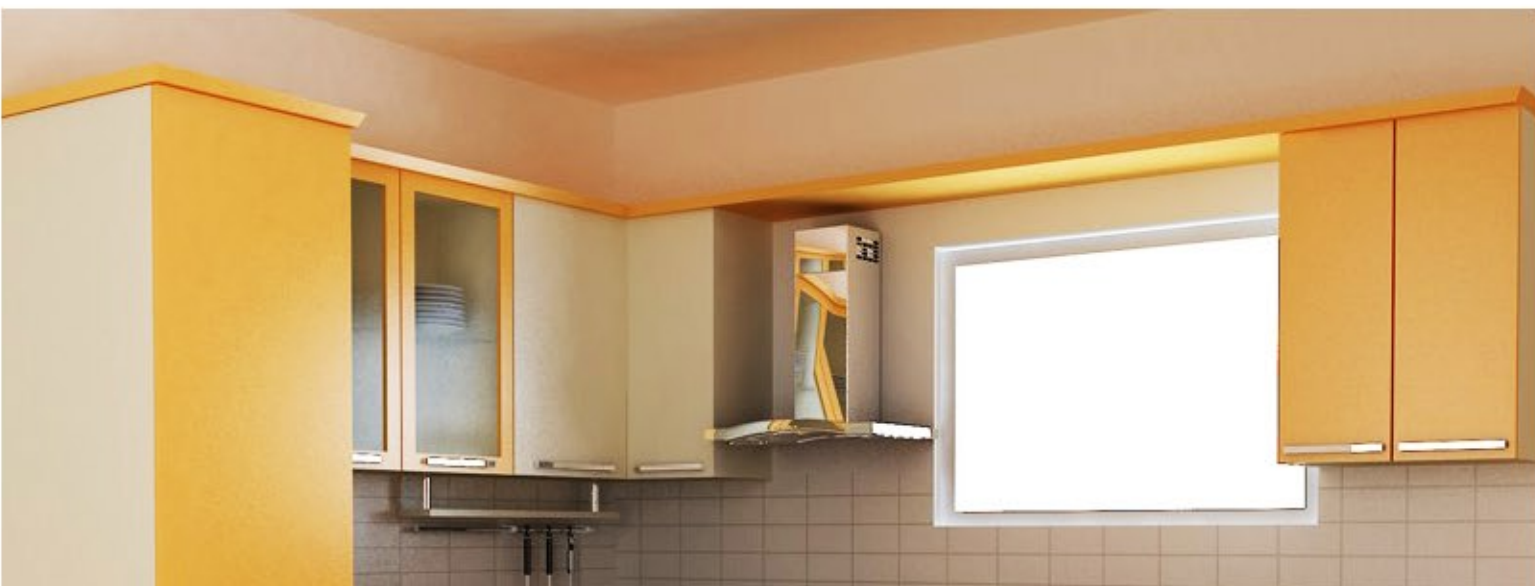
Assume, you have a kitchen that is 10 ft x 8 ft in carpet area and you have chosen a L Shaped kitchen design as shown in the pic.



*Then the length of under the counter cabinets (Base unit) could be 8 ft x 5 ft.  
So, your total area of base unit will be 40 sqft.*



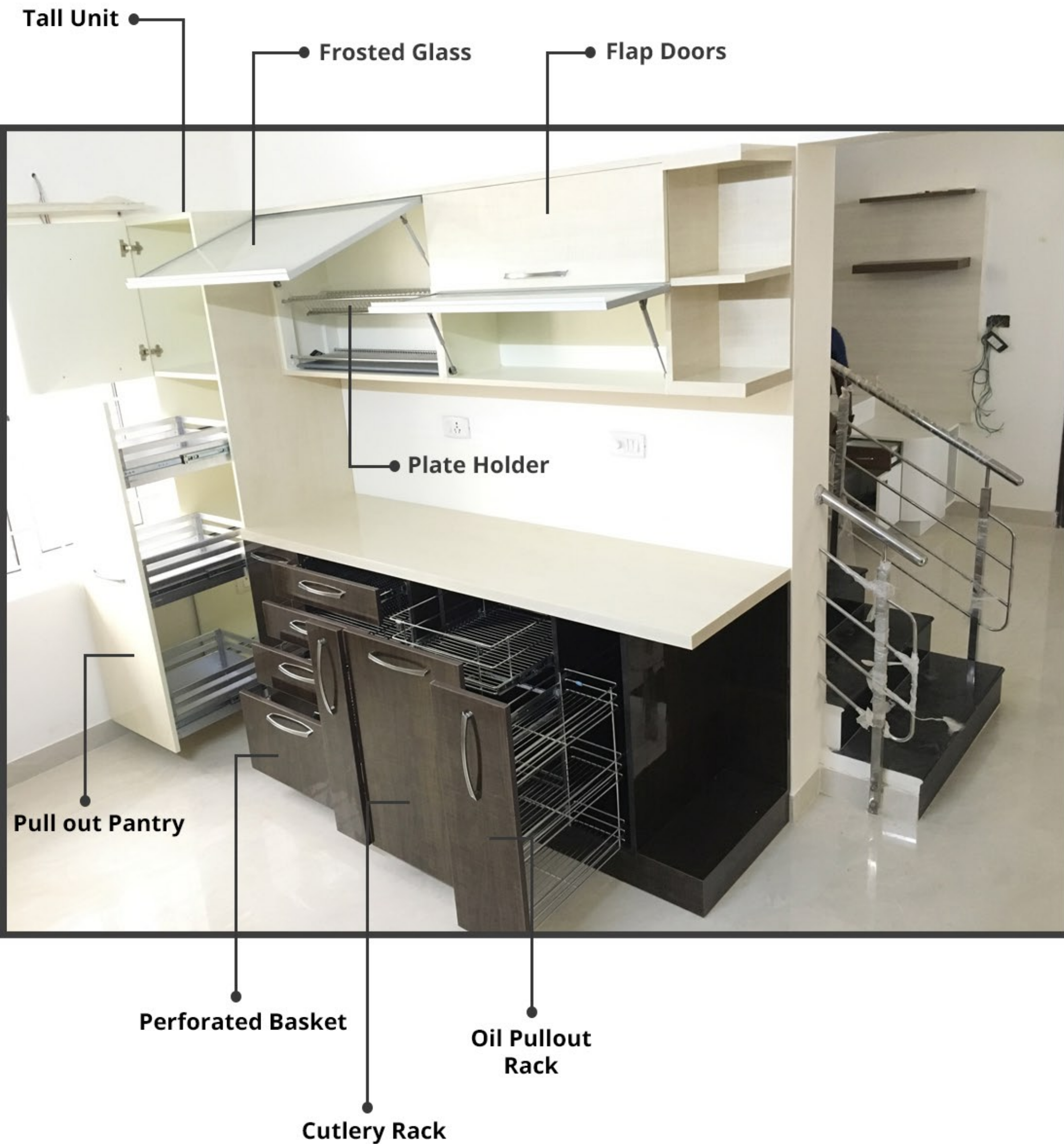
Similarly you would have to calculate the wall mount cabinets square feet area as well.



Loft works will be cheaper if it just involves Shuttering the frame and fixing doors.

Steel Accessories like cutlery rack, bin holder, vessel racks, corner racks etc will cost extra. A basic kitchen might require around Rs 20,000 worth of accessories. Cost of Appliances like Chimney, Hob, In-built oven will be extra. With this you will be able to arrive at an approximate price.

# ACCESSORIES USED IN A CROCKERY UNIT







# TYPE OF MATERIALS

## Nature Wood

1. Salwood
2. Teakwood
3. Rosewood
4. Padauk wood



## Artificial Wood

1. PLY WOOD
2. MDF
3. HDF
4. PARTICLE BOARD
5. CHIP BOARD







## Wood

India has been long known for its intrinsic artistry expertise in wooden works and carvings. We still have carpenters work with Natural wood like Teak, rosewood, Sal wood, Padauk etc. We have seen kitchen works last a generation with these kind of woods.

But the new generation of interior designers have moved away from Nature wood to man-made Manufactured boards. These boards have been considered a better choice because they are stable, are economic alternatives and come in large sizes with uniform thickness.

Most importantly the ultra beautiful modern kitchens are possible only with these because of ease with which they can be designed into.

Most common manufactured boards are plywood, chip board, particle board, MDF (Medium density fibre board), HDF (High-density fibreboard) etc.

Many of the factory made and imported wooden units are made using chip/particle/MDF/HDF boards. Water, weight with standing and weather changes affect these boards a bit more than plywood.





Custom made wood work are still being done in ply woods. Predominantly, Custom made wood work are still being done using ply woods.



"Your kitchen works lasting five years or 10 years depends upon the kind of material used mainly and of course - the maintenance"





# Exterior Finish

## Glass

Glass work give a classy finish. There are again wide variety to choose from and each comes with its own cost element. Some examples of glass works:



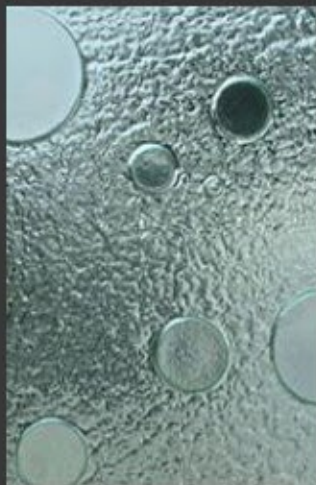
Interior fusion glasswork



Painted Glass



Ambrose hot fusion work



Ambrose Texture Work



Colour Designer Glass



Ice crystal work



Hot Fusion Work



Curved Glass



V grooving glasswork



There are a lot of unique materials that have been used for giving the finishing touch.

We even have a button manufacturer use buttons in a mosaic tile pattern for the facade of his building.

We have people use "cents" coins laminated as flooring. Few other unique material would be



Fabric



Faux leather



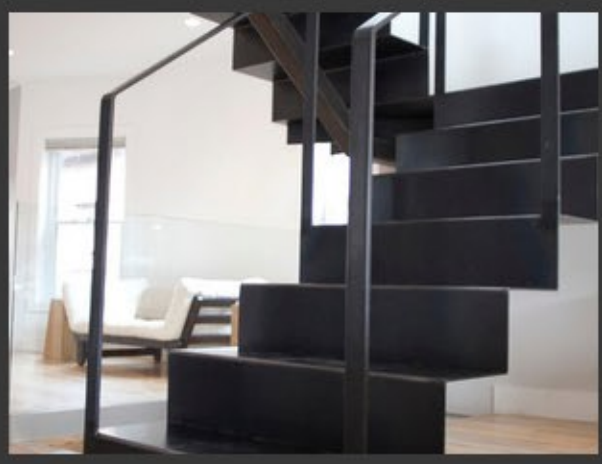
Stainless steel



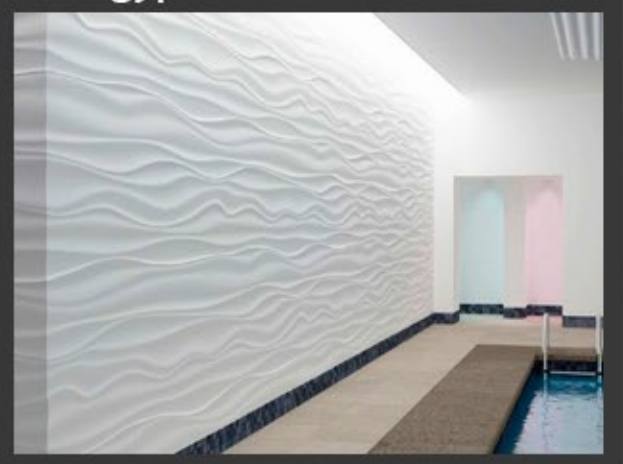
Mild steel



Sheet metal



3-D gypsum board



Type of material plays a major role in the pricing. For examples there are quite a lot of variety even in adhesives - synthetic resins, marine, heatex, easy spray and so on.





**Laminates** are most commonly used for exterior finishing. There are hundreds of variety of laminates - higher the design intensity higher the cost. Inner laminate of 0.8mm thickness and a exterior laminate of 1mm thickness is recommended.



**GLOSSY LAMINATE**

**HIGH GLOSS LAMINATE**



**SEMI MATT LAMINATE**

**TEXTURE LAMINATE**

**SOFT LAMINATE**



## PVC (PolyVinyl Chloride)

PVC is a low cost alternative to wood.

Its price range is nearly 10 times lower than its wooden counterpart. It is no match to a well done wooden unit, but day by day the colour choices and end finish keeps improving. If you need a quick and dirt cheap solution, this is the best.



BAMBOO

GREY DOT

COFFEE WOOD

STEEM BLEECH




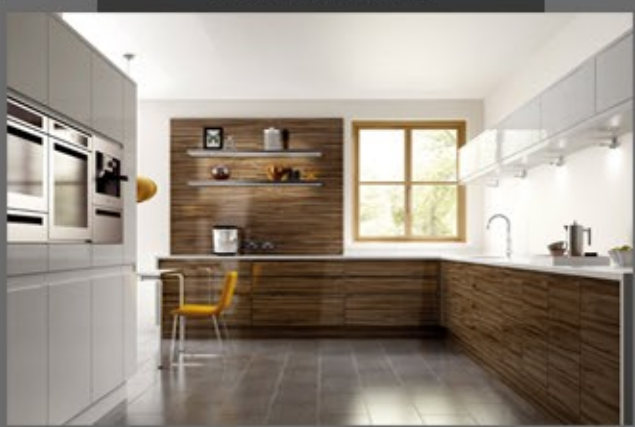


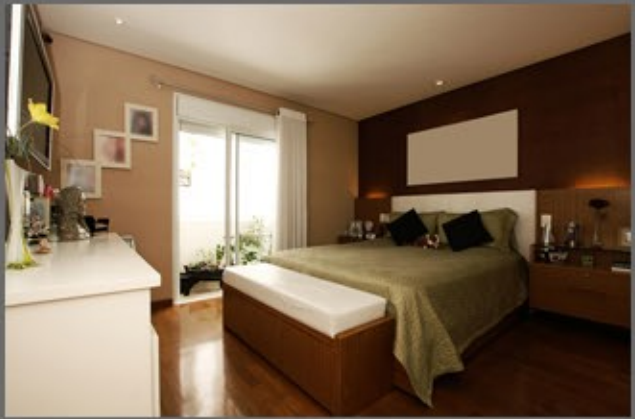






# DESIGN INTENSITY

Everybody loves having an unique and clever design. However, Having the utility value of the design in main focus is core to living with the interior design in a long Term.

Costing of your interior design work truly depends upon the design complexity. For example if you are designing your puja room it could be as simple as a shelf with a row of bells to having 200 ft.<sup>2</sup> of aesthetically divine wonder. So higher the complexity higher the cost!

Some samples of simple, medium level and high end design ideas:

| SIMPLE   | MEDIUM   | GRAND   | KITCHEN  |
|--|--|---|----------|
|   |   |   |          |
|  |  |  |          |
|  |  |  | BEDROOM  |
|  |  |   |          |
|  |  |   | PUJAROOM |
|  |  |   |          |



# HOW TO REDUCE YOUR QUOTATION COST

At this point of time you probably have a quotation provided by the interior designers. If not, you probably have a rough estimate.

You have a budget to work on one hand and you have the quotation on the other hand. The art of balancing this both requires a bit of patience.

**1. Delivery time:** Interior decoration is a labour intensive task. So, if you have a short deadline to finish interior decoration then the designer might argue that he needs to have x men more to do the task. Reducing the labour used can help lower cost to your decorator. Is "time" crucial for you? If you can afford longer duration for work completion, then this is a point that you can negotiate on.

**2. Workmanship:** Interior decoration is all about workmanship. So more the beautiful finish, the more the interior decorator is going to charge you. Interior decorator who works on Ambani's homes is going to be in a different league than the interior decorator used by your neighbor.



Do you actually need the high league interior decorator? Could the same job be done by someone with a lower profile? See the previous works of multiple interior decorators before awarding the contract. Indeed there is a huge difference in cost between beautiful " and "extraordinarily beautiful" workmanship. But a word of caution - when we say a lower league interior decorators we don't mean amateurs.



**3. Simplify design:** This is a sure shot way to reduce the cost. Go over the design to check if any changes to design might save cost. For example, do you really need the in-built oven? Or will a simple shelf to hold a Counter top OTG be enough?



**4. Do away with features :** Write down the list of must-haves Versus good-to-haves. For example, have you opted for false ceiling to beautify your living room in an under - construction house? Then, with a well finished masonry and electrical work plus a exquisite chandelier, you can do away with false ceiling.





**5. Substitute Material:** We are sure that the interior designer will offer the best of materials. But you really need a water proof ply for your bedroom cupboard? Think about it.



**6. Material change Vs Material downgrade:** Do you really need the work to last a generation? Could a particle board be substituted instead of plywood? Perhaps will PVC Material be sufficient considering maintenance and rental returns for the house you plan to let out?







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